CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

Website Update

11/01/ 2017

The City's mission statement centers around one central idea: **enhancing the quality of life for all residents.**

"Since the great recession of 2008, our goal has been to **create a platform for our residents, non-profits and the private sector to flourish.**"

— Greg Sundstrom, City Manager

"The website [is] our **digital front door** … [Anyone] should be able to do anything they do at City Hall on our website at any time, from any place, on any device."
— Mayor Rosalynn Bliss

- Empower public self-service
- Improve business processes
- Improve communication between the City and public
- Raise the profile and status of the City

Residents — in all their diversity — are the primary audience of the City's website.

- Residents: people who live in the City
- Businesses: people who work in the City
- Community groups: people who represent and serve different communities within the City
- Investors: people who support the City
- Visitors: people who live elsewhere but are in the City
- City officials: people who work for the City
- Media: people who write about the City

- Subdomains: 9
- Total URLs: 11,174
- Pages: 3,988 (72% SharePoint admin; 40% exposed)
- PDFs and files: 4,927
- External links: 1,298

Search and mobile are critically important.

- Last year, 68.40% of traffic came through search
- 5 years ago, smartphones and tablets accounted for just 5.75% of visits. Last year, 41.45% of all visits were made using a mobile device

Most existing content gets ignored.

- 279 pages accounted for more than 90% of all pageviews and 95% of all landing pages
- The same 50 pages have received 65% to 72% of all traffic each month for the past decade
- 57% of all users have never seen the homepage

The user experience isn't good.

- 75% of sessions lasted less than minute; 61.08% lasted less than 10 seconds
- 65% of users have only visited the site once
- 64% of all users have viewed just 1 page

- Site Structure: the shape of the new site
- Content Governance: the maintenance of the new site
- Brand Direction: the look and feel of the new site

City of Grand Rapids

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

Online Services ⌄   Resident ⌄   Business ⌄   About the City ⌄   Bienvenido ⌄

Payments
Income Tax
Parking Ticket
Property Tax
Refuse and Trash (PAYT)
Quick Search and Pay Water / Sewage
Registered Customers Water / Sewage Login
Other Payments

Lookup
Burial Records
Grand Rapids Open Data
City Jobs
Crime Data
Interactive Maps
Parking Facilities Map
Property Tax & Assessment
Refuse Pickup Schedule
Road Closure Map
Road Construction
Zoning Map

Report It
Customer Service Survey
311 Customer Service
File a Claim
Pothole
Property Violation
Report a Crime

Permits & Applications
Apply for a Permit
Permits and Applications Map
Permit Questions

📢 News   📅 Events   📈 Programs & Initiatives

Quality of life programs eligible for Neighborhood Match aid
March 6, 2017

City Commission meets at LINC UP Tuesday night
March 3, 2017

GRAND Re-OPENING Indian Trails GOLF COURSE 06.10 2017

Indian Trails Golf Tournament Registration Now Open
March 1, 2017

City of Grand Rapids

Google Custom Search   🔍

Home > Treasury > Income-Tax > Individual Payment Options

Income-Tax
General Information
FAQ
Individual Tax Forms
Individual Payment Options
Employer Tax Forms
Corporation and Partnership Tax Forms
E-Filing
Strategic Goals and Duties
Additional Resources
Tax ID Lookup
Estimated Payment and Credit Forward Lookup
Grand Rapids Street Directory
Departments

Our office is located at 300 Monroe NW, Grand Rapids, MI, in the City Hall Building on Calder Plaza, Third Floor. Phone: 616-456-3415 . Hours: 8:00am – 5:00 p.m Monday through Friday.

A balance usually does not need to be paid in full, but to pay off a balance owed, call our office for the current total amount. To avoid court action we ask that all balances are paid in full within one year with a payment being made every thirty days. Penalty and interest increase on the tax due not the tax total.

 We accept income tax payments in a number of ways:

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS USING VISA, MASTERCARD, & DISCOVER

o **Telephone** – Make a payment by phone using a credit card. This is a service provided to the City by Official Payments, so there is a 3% fee. The phone number is 1-877-495-0333 .
o **Web** – Make a payment with a credit card by using the website www.officialpayments.com. This is a service provided to the City by Official Payments, so there is a 3% fee.
o **Fax** – Fax your credit card information to our department using the Grand Rapids City Treasurer Fax Credit Card Payment Advice form. Complete and sign the form and fax it back (fax: 616-456-4540); There is a fee of 2.5% ($1 minimum) for making a credit card payment by fax.
o **In Person Credit card fees** – Debit - fee is $1.50 under $60
                                       Debit and Credit- fee is 2.5% ($1.50 minimum)

Direct Withdrawal from Checking of Savings account
o **Web** – Make estimated tax payments at www.municonnect.com/grandrapids There are several steps required to setup an account, but you then would have access to your total estimated tax payments made for the year–if you make all the payments using this method. You must have your alt ID or account number and filed in the previous year to use this site.
o **Fax** – Fax your checking or savings account information to 616-456-4540 using the Grand Rapids City Treasurer Fax Credit Card Payment Advice form. The form can also be faxed or emailed to you upon request.
o **Email** – Make a payment using your checking or savings account by emailing your complete name, daytime telephone number, bank routing number, bank account number, name of the financial institution, the type of account, amount to be paid, and date the payment is to be processed (withdrawn) to grincometax@grcity.us
o **Automatic monthly withdrawal** – fill out the automatic withdrawal form and fax to 616-456-4540 or email to grincometax@grcity.us

Check and Money Order
o **By Mail** – Make checks payable to the "Grand Rapids City Treasurer." Write your social security number or federal identification number (or Grand Rapids income tax account number) on the check and write the type of tax that you are paying: **Never send a check or money order without some form of documentation.** Mail to Grand Rapids Income Tax, PO Box 347, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.
o **In Person** – Payments by check or money order are always welcomed.

Cash Payments are payable only in person DO NOT MAIL CASH
Bench Warrant payments made before a guilty plea or verdict may be paid in person or by mail. But the payment may only be made by cash, money order, or certified check. Do not mail cash.

Bench Warrant payments for tax liabilities that are under a guilty plea or verdict are payable only through the 61st District Court. Contact: 616-632-5525 or pay online: http://www.grcourt.org/

🔴 **Human Resources**
Civil Service Explained
Governmentjobs.com Login
Job Opportunities - General Pu...
Job Opportunities - City Employees
Seasonal and Temporary Jobs
Job Descriptions/Interest Cards
Employee Benefits
Contact Us
Departments
Retiree

documentation when submitting your claim:

1) Receipts for amount paid (or the bill if the amount has not yet been paid);
2) The property address, license plate, or other identifying record from the account and the date when this matter first occurred;
3) A report of the response from a supervisor in the City department involved, if available.

If you require assistance with completing the forms, please do not hesitate to contact the City's Risk Management Office at (616) 456-3707.

Please note that failure to provide all requested information will delay processing and will result in a denial of your claim. Once your completed claim forms and supporting documentation are received, you will be notified in writing of our receipt of the claim packet. A thorough investigation will be conducted by the appropriate City department(s). Once a determination has been made, you will be notified in writing.

NON-AUTO PROPERTY DAMAGE (other than Sewer Backup):

- 10 tasks
- 2 click path tests
- 60 random CUT Group users
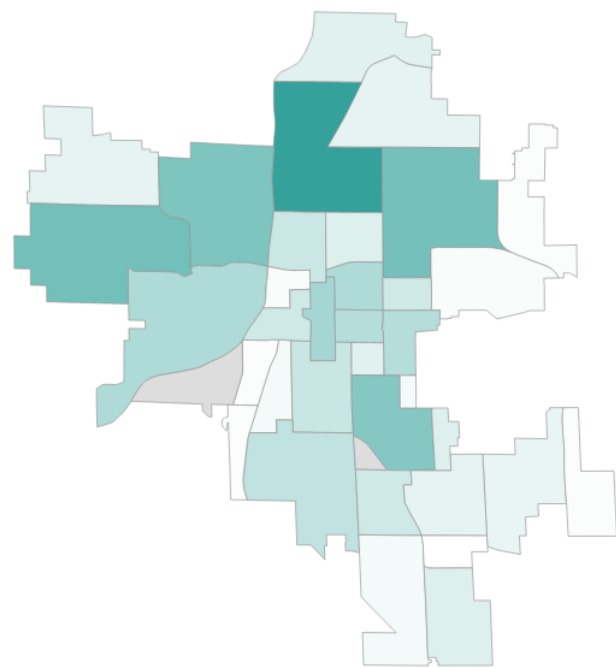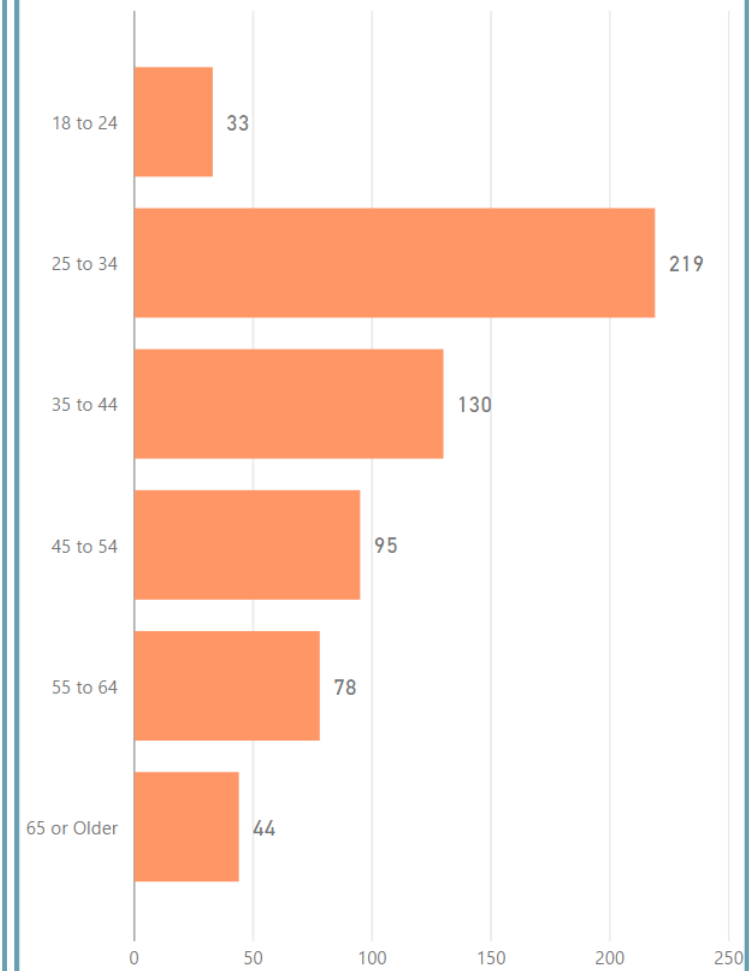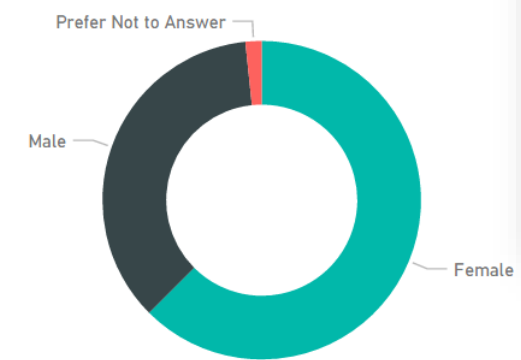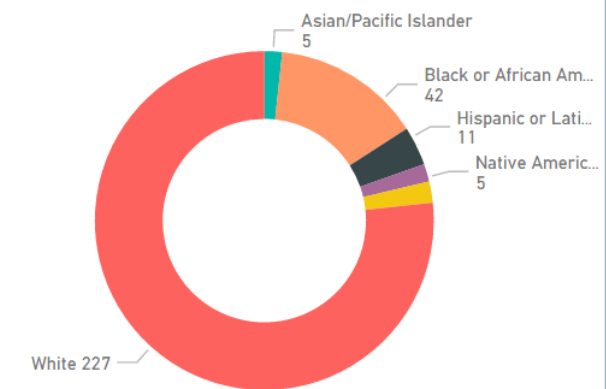
- Success rate: 97% (↑ 24.63%)
- Directness: 85% (↑ 34.92%)
- Time: 3.23 minutes (↓ 44.12%)

SITE MAP

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS Website IA v0.2
Site Map

Landing page focused on top issues and tasks for City residents.

Landing page focused on top issues and tasks for City businesses.

Landing page focused on the who and what of the City of Grand Rapids as an organization.

Landing page focused on the City of Grand Rapids as a place.

These five items are quick links to pages addressing topics / tasks people come to the City website for most often.

List of departments, programs, places, and people. Search filters page to display only results that match the query.

Searchable da_ of City info an_ tasks—all the t_ a user might w_ know (articles _ (guides and fo_

Home	For Residents	For Business	Our Government	Our City	Parking and Transit	Public Safety	Recycling and Trash	Taxes	Water	Directory	Help / 3_
Featured	Housing	Development and Construction	Elected Officials	Visit						Search	Searc_
	Neighborhoods	Parking	Boards and Commissions	History						Departments and Offices	Articles
	Parking	Permits and Inspections	Departments and Offices	Recognition and Rankings						Programs and Initiatives	Guides
	Parks and Recreation	Recycling and Trash	Programs and Initiatives	Neighbor-hoods						Places	Forms
	Public Safety	Taxes	Public Meetings	Maps						People	

Content Governance

- Website strategy
- Process
- Roles and workflows
- Brand voice and tone
- Writing for the web
- Style and grammar
- Search engine optimization
- Brand identity and imagery

Content Production and Maintenance Process

Valuable content doesn't just magically happen. Without a process—and people committed to following it—content tends to be deprioritized, ignored altogether, or overrun by competing interests. A process and clearly defined roles gives us something to work with and hold each other accountable to. It clarifies expectations and helps us think through what needs to get done.

The diagram belo

CONTENT PRODUCTION & MAINTENANCE PROCESS

Notice that the pr
monitor it for cont
to initiate addition

Step 1: Initiat

MIGHTY

CONTENT GUIDELINES

The City o

UPDATED: FEBRUARY

SUBMITTED ON FEBRUARY 23,

Michael Colletto
(616) 222-0778 x708
michael@mightyinthemidwest.com

Hello

Whether you're writing a news post, program description, how-to guide, email campaign, soc
post, or even a headline or button text, this guide will help you write solid and engaging con
the City of Grand Rapids' brand.

Content is the number one feature of the City's website.

People come to the City of Grand Rapids for its content. Content is all the text, data, docume
and services the City provides. It's why the site exists. It's how people find it. It's why they sh
they come back ... or why they don't.

Strong design and reliable technology play a critical role in the user experience, but it's our c
provides value to our residents and businesses, defines our brand, builds trust, and inspires
participate in making Grand Rapids an exceptional place to live and work.

It takes planning and hard work to create and maintain good website

Our website is never completely finished ... and that's a good thing. Features will evolve and
added as we learn more about our citizens and find ways to improve their experience. The c
already created must change constantly to remain accurate, up-to-date, and relevant.

Website Strategy

Our website strategy outlines what we want to achieve and, more importantly, *how* we plan to achieve it.
It's essential to the success of any great website, and there are two foundational components:

1. Why the site exists

The City's website exists to enhance the quality of life for everyone in Grand Rapids. Specifically, it:
- Empowers customer self-service, allowing users to find information and complete tasks with ease
  and confidence
- Improves two-way communication and collaboration between the City and its citizens, helping the
  City to better meet people's needs and giving citizens the means to participate in making the city
  an even better place to live

All content should support this purpose.

2. Who the site exists for

Residents—in all their diversity—are the primary audience of the City's website. They are young and
old; urban and suburban; born in the City and new to the state; farmers and tech entrepreneurs; differently
abled; differently educated; and represent the full spectrum of races, ethnicities, incomes, and gender
identities.

GR DIGITAL TRAINING MANUALS

- Navigation glossary
- Events manual
- Meetings manual
- News manual
- Services directory manual
- Venue manual
- User role descriptions
- Permissions manual

- **Voice and Tone:** non-visual brand direction
- **Style Tiles:** visual brand direction

- **Voice is our personality.** It's the written expression of our identity. These attributes *do not change* and should be recognizably present in everything we say and write.
- **Tone is our approach.** It's how we conduct ourselves in relation to others. Tone is *audience-specific* (we meet people where they are) and *context-aware* (we adjust to match the situation).

- Familiar
- Vibrant
- Straightforward
- Helpful
- Forward-thinking

VOICE AND TONE GUIDELINES

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
BRAND VOICE & TONE GUIDELINES

Brand Voice and Tone

Our brand is our identity.

Brand is more than logos, colors, and fonts. Br
everyone at the City of Grand Rapids says and
neighborhoods of Grand Rapids), digital space
everything we create—from city plans to eve

Words and images don't simply convey inform
communicates values and sets expectations.
reinforces—or contradicts and undermines—o

Those of us who create content for the City of
write on behalf of the government and the city
and to those we've just met. Everything we c

So who are we?

At our heart, the City of Grand Rapids believes
every citizen to have equitable access to the
in our mission statement and reflected in the

We describe the City as "a people who come
raises everyone's quality of life" that is "becom
consistent goal for our City: "I want Grand Rap

The City of Grand Rapids continues to value a

- **Customer service** — Provide any and
- **Innovation** — Foster an atmosphere f
  new partners, forming new alliances,
- **Transparency** — Build trust with our c
  and engage them in our government.
- **Inclusiveness** — Celebrate and streng
  all citizens, and equitably deliver serv
- **Sustainability** — Steward finances, na
  of life for residents.

Tone

Our tone of voice is contextual.

There's a difference between voice and tone. Our voice doesn't change, but our tone changes all the time based on who we're talking to and where the conversation is taking place.

Tone is audience-specific

Our tone should meet people where they are. For example, if our audience is crunched for time, we don't ramble on. If our audience really cares about details and numbers, we speak in specifics. Here are some examples:

- **Residents**: writing should be helpful, personal, knowledgeable, and straightforward. These people are looking for help paying a bill, finding information about parking, and seeing what their recycling route is. You can talk to them in a personal, helpful manner. They should feel welcomed and taken care of, but also feel as if the City of Grand Rapids is a professional, well-informed government. Be authentic and honest, speak with clarity, and make them comfortable asking any questions.
- **Businesses**: writing should demonstrate knowledge and enthusiasm for both first-time business owners and established businesses. Write with confidence and authority. Be helpful and encouraging. Be clear and concise with valuable information.

Tone is context-aware

Our tone should adjust to match the situation. This is really about empathy—putting ourselves in our audience's shoes and thinking about how they may be feeling in a particular situation. A customer looking for information on special events downtown is in a vastly different state of mind than a customer trying to pay their water bill or find information about property taxes. Always keep our tone appropriate to the circumstances and to the audience. For example:

- **Residents**
  - *Paying bills* — You want to create a sense of security and trust. Be specific and helpful.
  - *Looking for resident information (e.g., property taxes, recycling and trash pick-up)* — Be friendly and concise.
  - *Taxes* — Be kind and helpful. Taxes can cause a lot of stress, so alleviating any of that will be your goal.
- **Businesses**
  - *Taxes* — Business owners are looking for a sense of trust and knowledge.
  - *Parking information* — Show a map and give information succinctly.
  - *Construction and Development* — Give straightforward information and keep business owners updated periodically.

Vibrant *full of energy and enthusiasm; pulsating with vigor and energy*

The City of Grand Rapids is a vibrant, enthusiastic city. Our unique heritage is showcased throughout a diverse range of events in arts, sports, music, humanities, and culture—but also in our people and how we choose to speak. Our vibrant language shows that we're passionate and proud to be Grand Rapidians. Grand Rapids is *the* place to be.

Write like this:
"Are you thinking ab
home? Congratulat
chosen the best city-
little biased. Your firs
a class or going to co
at these options to e

When writing, ask
- Is this interesting
- Does this make r

Tips for sounding V
- Use active, not p
  instead of "Busin
- Limit adverbs (w
- Show, not tell. U
- Replace clumsy p
  focuses on the c
- Use colorful, fun
- Inject personal a

Straightforward *uncomplicated and easy to understand; honest and frank*

The City of Grand Rapids acts and speaks with clarity. We're expressive and concise. We avoid jargon and unnecessary complexity. We don't use big words to impress or intimidate. We know what we're
th simplicity and precision.

Not like this:
"From simple solutions like utilizing single stream recycling to more complex initiatives like waste material management, we're committed to making Grand Rapids one of the cleanest and most sustainable cities in the United States."

, paragraph] obvious?
get bored?

sections.

or "basic"

"His past history
lly tailored ...").
/readable.io/.

5 OF 8

Familiar *well known from close association; well-acquainted; thoroughly conversant; informal; easygoing*

The City of Grand Rapids is approachable and personal. Our website is the digital front door to the city, and we welcome our citizens and visitors in a friendly manner. We're easy to talk to and down to earth, but professional—ensuring that you trust us with everything from your bi-weekly recycling schedule to financial information.

Write like this:
"311 is your one call to City Hall. Find answers to all your questions—and if you can't, give us a ring."

Not like this:
"Our 311 service wants you to feel at home—grab a cup of coffee and scroll through our FAQs! You're sure to find answers to any question you might have."

When writing, ask yourself:
- Would this put me as ease?
- Would I say this to someone I know well?
- Do I sound like someone I'd want to talk to?

Tips for sounding Familiar:
- Write in the first person (e.g., "we").
- Address your audience directly (e.g., "you").
- Avoid talking exclusively about yourself.
- Avoid internal government jargon and meaningless buzzwords (e.g., avoid referring to specific city ordinances without a description; don't pad your writing with impressive-sounding, but empty phrases; etc.).
- Write in a conversational manner and test everything you write by reading it out loud. If you feel silly, you're not writing like a human.

Inclusive   **Vibrant**   **Innovative**   **Growing**

Beautifully accessible is forward-thinking